

# Bagging that buck on the property you hunt

By J. Wayne Fears  
A successful deer hunter must know how deer behave in the wild, have been close enough to deer to bag them and have amassed a wealth of knowledge about how to find and take deer from in-the-field experience. Let's look at some tips for bagging a big buck.

### Know You Have a Big Buck to Hunt:

Even if you're the best hunter in the nation, you won't be able to take a big buck, if you don't know there's a trophy buck on the property where you hunt. To determine if a trophy buck is on that land, go into the woods after the deer have shed their antlers, and look for trophy racks. If you find a big set of antlers that have been shed, you can assume that a trophy buck is on that property. Also, enter your hunting area before deer season, and start to scout then. Try to see a big buck before hunting pressure drives him to cover.

Hunters need to go into the woods throughout the year to search for and study deer. Then you can collect information before the season begins and after it ends about what deer are on the property for you to hunt, as well as what routes the deer travel, and the food sources they use. Another way to find out if you have a trophy buck on your hunting lands is to talk to the people who drive up and down the roads through the woodlot where you plan to hunt. Loggers, mailmen, school bus drivers and people normally traveling through your hunting region,

while driving back and forth to work and school, often will see and know the whereabouts of a big buck.

Taking a trophy buck involves more than luck. Careful Preparation and flawless execution equals luck.

If shining deer at night is legal in your state, go into the woods and fields at night with a light before and after the season to see deer. But make sure you're not violating the law in the state where you hunt. An important safety practice is to notify the local conservation officer as to where you'll be on the night you plan to look for deer, and let him know what you're doing. To take a trophy deer, you must have a big deer to hunt.

### Have a Thorough Knowledge of the Property You Hunt:

You must understand the lay of the land you hunt, including the land's contours, where the creeks and the streams run, and where the roads go through the property. You also need to know the traditional movement patterns of the deer on that property, because deer on any woodlot will establish routes of travel. Once you understand what those historical routes are, you can go to that same land year after year and find deer. If you spend your time learning one piece of property thoroughly, you'll bag more big deer more consistently than those who hunt three- or four-different locations during a season. The only exception to this rule is the trophy deer hunter who can travel to Texas, Mexico, Alberta or some of the other areas where trophy bucks are



*It's not every day that someone from our area is fortunate enough to travel north for a bear hunt. Paul Williams, a rancher north of Bronte, brought down this grizzly in June 2011 in northern British Columbia. He was hunting with Ron Fleming of Love Brothers and Lee. Paul stated "I would highly recommend hunting with them for moose, caribou, mountain goat, Stone sheep, black and grizzly bear, wolves. You can contact them at lovebroslee.com." He added, "The hunt was a gift from my nephew, it was truly a gift of time and beauty. Everyone should take the time to visit northern British Columbia!"*

much more abundant than they are in most regions of the United States. Most of us are looking for better places to hunt, rather than learning the best spots to hunt on the properties we have to hunt.

### Understand How to Hunt the Rut:

To take a trophy buck, you need to have as much time as possible to hunt that buck during the peak of the rut, which is when the trophy buck is the most vulnerable and is most likely to be bagged. However, the time of the peak of the rut is different in each state and may vary even inside the state. Therefore, the best way to

know when the peak of the rut occurs in the state and the particular place you plan to hunt is to contact the state wildlife biologist in your area. Ask for copies of studies or information that may have been compiled by wildlife scientists that will show you when the peak of the rut is in the region you want to hunt. Too, remember that once an animal becomes a trophy buck, he'll primarily move at night, because he's learned that there's less dan-

ger then and that he can move more freely and safely at night than in the daytime. When hunting season begins, this trophy buck becomes more sensitized to human activity and more secretive and harder to locate. But when the rut occurs, the urge to reproduce supersedes his natural caution for a short time. He'll either be searching for or pursuing an estrous doe during daylight hours, which make this buck easier for the hunter to take.

**RANCH • FARM • RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL**

# PITCOCK PROPERTIES

[www.pitcockproperties.com](http://www.pitcockproperties.com) / 325-650-4079

*Jerrod Pitcock, Owner/Broker*

**Just under 80 acres on Hwy 208 near Robert Lee, two houses & three barns, water wells, working pens, bank forecloser, \$265,000 bring offer 152 Ac. in Coke County with New Water Well! \$1250/acre.**

**2734 Ac. in Reagan County with Water Wells, 4/2 Home, large shop, barns & pens, Game Management program for last 7 years! \$700/acre**

**1600 Ac. in Reagan County \$425/ac. with Water Wells, Hunting Cabin, Game Management for last 6 years, 160 B&C deer taken!**

**3568 Ac. in Ozona with rugged terrain, Water Wells, Cabin \$695/acre**

*Welcome Hunters!*

**German & Teresa Pena's**  
**Red Barn Barbecue**  
*welcomes all the*  
**Hunters & Fishermen**  
*to Coke County!*  
 We are open for  
**Mexican Food** Breakfast • Lunch • Supper **American Food**  
**Catfish Special All Day Friday**  
 Open Tuesday through Saturday • 8 am - 8:45 pm  
 Sunday - 9 am - 2 pm

**THE CASTON COMPANY LLC**  
 Conservation Contractor Specializing in  
 Conserving Our Natural Resources  
 Marty Caston • Leta Caston  
 (325) 277-1375 • (325) 453-2453 office  
 Fully Insured For Your Protection

**During Your Stay, Stop In At**  
**This 'N That Shop**  
 711 Austin Street • Downtown Robert Lee  
 Store • (325) 453-4307  
 Leta Caston • (325) 453-2453  
 Store Hours:  
 Thursdays & Saturdays 10 am to 4 pm  
 Open by Appointment, call  
 Cyndy Caston • (325) 277-4710  
 Gifts - Past and Present